

AMENDMENTS

In the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) An electret filter medium, comprising a lactic acid polymer having a molar ratio of an L-lactic acid monomer to a D-lactic acid monomer in the range from ~~100 to 85 : 0 to 15~~ 100:0 to 85:15 and a content of lactide of at most 15% based on the weight of the medium.

2. (Currently Amended) The electret filter medium according to Claim 1, wherein ~~it is mainly composed of a~~ the medium consists essentially of the lactic acid polymer ~~[[that]]~~ and produces an endotherm of at least 0.5 J/g accompanied with crystal fusion.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) The electret filter medium according to Claim 1, ~~wherein it has~~ consisting essentially of the lactic acid polymer and having a surface charge density of at least $1.2 \times 10^{-9} / \text{cm}^2$.

5. (Currently Amended) The electret filter medium according to Claim 1, consisting essentially of the lactic acid polymer and further comprising 0.01 to 0.3 parts by weight of a nucleating agent based on 100 parts by weight of the lactic acid polymer.

6. (Currently Amended) ~~A process for producing the~~ The electret filter medium according to Claim 1, made by the process comprising the steps of:

applying a direct current corona electric field to a nonwoven fabric while heating it to a temperature of 60°C to 140°C, wherein the nonwoven fabric comprises fibers mainly composed of a lactic acid polymer; and

then cooling the nonwoven fabric to a temperature of 40°C or lower while applying the electric field to the nonwoven fabric.

7. (Currently Amended) An electret filter medium, comprising a lactic acid polymer having a molar ratio of an L-lactic acid monomer to a D-lactic acid monomer in the range from 0

~~to 15:85 to 100~~ 0:100 to 15:85 and a content of lactide of at most 15% based on the weight of the medium.

8. (Currently Amended) The electret filter medium according to Claim 7, wherein ~~it is mainly composed of a~~ the medium consists essentially of the lactic acid polymer ~~[[that]]~~ and produces an endotherm of at least 0.5 J/g accompanied with crystal fusion.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) The electret filter medium according to Claim 7, ~~wherein it has~~ consisting essentially of the lactic acid polymer and having a surface charge density of at least $1.2 \times 10^{-9} / \text{cm}^2$.

11. (Currently Amended) The electret filter medium according to Claim 7, consisting essentially of the lactic acid polymer and further comprising 0.01 to 0.3 parts by weight of a nucleating agent based on 100 parts by weight of the lactic acid polymer.

12. (Currently Amended) ~~A process for producing the~~ The electret filter medium according to Claim 7, made by the process comprising the steps of:

applying a direct current corona electric field to a nonwoven fabric while heating the nonwoven fabric to a temperature of 60°C to 140°C, wherein the nonwoven fabric comprises fibers mainly composed of a lactic acid polymer; and

then cooling the nonwoven fabric to a temperature of 40°C or lower while applying the electric field to the nonwoven fabric.

13. (New) The electret filter medium according to Claim 1, wherein the lactic acid polymer is purified using recrystallization, heat distillation or reduced-pressure distillation to reduce residual low-molecular weight components.

14. (New) The electret filter medium according to Claim 7, wherein the lactic acid polymer is purified using recrystallization, heat distillation or reduced-pressure distillation to reduce residual low-molecular weight components.